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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/530,244	04/04/2005	Takahisa Hikida	01050_1003	2655
30671	7590	06/18/2007	EXAMINER	
DITTHAVONG MORI & STEINER, P.C. 918 Prince St. Alexandria, VA 22314			HUG, ERIC J	
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1731				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
06/18/2007		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/530,244	HIKIDA, TAKAHISA	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Eric Hug	1731	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 April 2005.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) 6-9 is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-5 and 10-13 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 04 April 2005 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

1. Claims 1, 4, 5, 10, 12, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Matuschczyk et al (DE 101 38 526; US 6,932,888 is being relied upon as an English language translation).

Matuschczyk discloses an elastic shoe press cover comprising a polyurethane layer (30) with reinforcing fabric (31, 32) embedded therein, and having a constant thickness as measured along axially parallel lines. The press cover is shaped so that its inner circumferential surface, particularly at the end regions, departs from being cylindrical. The inner circumferential surface of the press cover end region is slightly conical, with an internal diameter which increases outward or inward. This facilitates mounting of the press cover end regions to a supporting element. See column 3, lines 4-22. In a particular embodiment, the press cover 10B illustrated in Figure 5 differs from a cylindrical press cover 10A illustrated in FIG. 4. The inner circumferential surface in the end regions is not continuously cylindrical but is slightly conical with an internal diameter that decreases from the outside toward the inside. This shape facilitates the removal of a press cover that is worn and has to be replaced. See column 5, lines 50-62. The

shoe press comprises a rotatable supporting element upon which the ends of the press cover are mounted. When rotating, the cover slides on a press shoe pressing on the inside surface of the cover.

2. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, and 10-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Sakuma et al (US 2002/0028317).

Sakuma discloses a coated papermaking belt composed of a base layer and a thick resin layer. The thick resin layer is formed so that its thickness at the opposite side edges is smaller than that of the middle part. This reduces shrinkage of the thick resin layer and curling of the edges. The reduction in curling stabilizes turning of the belt and facilitates belt installation. In Figures 1(a) and 1(b), belt 1 comprises a base layer 2 and a resin layer 3 formed on the inner surface of the base layer 2, i.e., on the shoe side of the belt. In the resin layer 3, opposite side edges A and B are thinner than the middle part C. This is equivalently a belt having an inner diameter reduced from both ends to the center. Figure 3(c) gives an example where the difference in thickness between the end and the center is 1.0 mm, as the thickness of the inner resin layer tapers from a thickness of 1.0 mm to 0.0 mm. This gives rise to a difference in diameter of 2.0 mm (two times the thickness), which falls within the claimed range of 1-15 mm. Figure 4 shows a shoe press with a press shoe and a rotating press belt rotating about the press shoe.

3. Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Hikida (WO 03/085196; US 2005/0145360 is being relied upon as an English translation).

Hikida discloses a shoe press belt manufactured impregnating a reinforcing base layer (12, 22, 32, ...) with an elastic material, hardening this elastic material to form a first elastic layer (13, 23, 33, ...) and a second elastic layer (14, 24, 34, ...), and thereafter reducing the thickness of one of the layers from the central portion toward the end portions. Figure 3, in particular, illustrates a press belt 31 wherein the thickness of the second elastic layer 34, set on the inner peripheral surface of the reinforcing base, is progressively reduced from a central portion toward the end portions. This gives rise to a crowned shape for the second elastic layer 34.

The press belt has a thickness of 2 to 10 mm (see paragraph [0025]). The difference between the thickness of the central portion and the thickness of the end portions is 2 to 30% of the thickness of the central portion (paragraph [0027]). Thus, the maximum difference in thickness can be 3 mm (30% of 10 mm). In this instance, the maximum difference in diameter is 6 mm, which falls within the claimed range of 5-10 mm.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 6-9 are allowed.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

The claims are allowable for stretching a sleeve formed of an uncured or imperfectly cured elastic material between two rolls in the manner as claimed followed by perfectly curing the elastic material while rotating the sleeve in a stretched state.

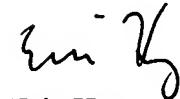
The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

JP 06-266253 (cited by Applicant) discloses a method of stretching the ends of an elastic pressure belt in image forming equipment, wherein the belt is arranged about two fixed rollers, then heated, and the stretched by deflection of the rollers.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eric Hug whose telephone number is 571 272-1192.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Steven Griffin can be reached on 571 272-1189. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Eric Hug
Primary Examiner